




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2019

MOTION

Future Drought Fund

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (11.30 am): In accordance with standing orders, I declare that my partner has a drought-declared property in the Blackall-Tambo shire. I just want to be very clear about that. I am really disappointed in what the Palaszczuk Labor government is doing in relation to drought assistance. The Palaszczuk Labor government, in response to their drought review, is removing fodder and water subsidies from drought assistance. Those drought assistance measures have been in place for a long time in Queensland. In their response they say, 'DAF to consult with industry on transition with transition arrangements to commence from 1 July 2019.' That was months ago and there has been absolutely nothing.

It is the same when it comes to the freight subsidy. They say that when the freight subsidies cease on the revocation of drought declarations they will commence consultation with industry. They say 'transition arrangements to commence from 1 July 2019'. We have seen absolutely nothing as to what those transition arrangements are. My entire electorate is drought declared. I challenge the minister to come out to places like Nindigully.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for McConnel and Leader of the Opposition, stop quarrelling across the chamber.

Ms LEAHY: I challenge the minister to come out to places like The Gums, where there is not a single tuft of grass left on properties out there. Those people are surviving because they are getting assistance from the Morrison government. They are getting drought communities assistance. They are on farm household support. They are receiving that assistance. They are not getting assistance from the Palaszczuk Labor government because that assistance has been taken away by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

The Morrison government are providing \$13 million for the extension of the Drought Communities Program. That is there to help support local governments. I have seen absolutely nothing from the Palaszczuk Labor government when it comes to supporting drought-affected local governments. They have done nothing for rate relief and nothing for small businesses—absolutely nothing. They have been called on by David Littleproud, who is the minister for drought, to help with council rates, and they have done absolutely nothing. They never even replied to his correspondence. How disappointing is that!

The Morrison government is delivering a \$5 billion Future Drought Fund. They are also paying lump sums of \$12,000 over two instalments to farmers who are on the farm household allowance. That is a massive help to those people who are out there who are really struggling. That money goes back into the small businesses and drought-affected towns across my region. Those people appreciate that assistance. We have lots of people who are on the farm household allowance. It helps them manage through this situation.

We are not seeing the commitment from the Palaszczuk Labor government. They are phasing out drought assistance from the state government. It is absolutely shameful. It is absolutely disgraceful. We have not heard anything from them. They put out a report and they do absolutely nothing. It is so disappointing.